



Office of the
Healthcare
Advocate
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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**Testimony of Victoria Veltri
Healthcare Advocate & General Counsel
Before the Insurance and Real Estate Committee**

In support of HB 5013

February 14, 2012

Good afternoon, Representative Megna, Senator Crisco, Senator Kelly, Representative Sampson, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. For the record, I am Vicki Veltri, Healthcare Advocate and General Counsel with the Office Healthcare Advocate ("OHA"). OHA is an independent state agency with a three-fold mission: assuring managed care consumers have access to medically necessary healthcare; educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans; and, informing you of problems consumers are facing in accessing care and proposing solutions to those problems.

The Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange Board serves a critically important is Connecticut's development and implementation of an equitable, functional and sustainable insurance exchange. Consistent with the Board's statutory mandate, "the goals of the exchange shall be to reduce the number of individuals without health insurance in this state and assist individuals and small employers in the procurement of health insurance by, among other services, offering easily comparable and understandable information about health insurance options." HB 5013 promotes this effort by giving the populations considered in the statute a real voice in the process by extending those rights and responsibilities endowed in the current Board to a small employer, a healthcare consumer and the Healthcare Advocate. The vesting of voting rights will actively promote the spirit of the law and facilitate great transparency and representation. Given the significant insight that these additional board members will bring, and in light of the impending deadlines and work that the Board still needs to do, I recommend making the provisions of this bill effective immediately upon passage.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to deliver OHA's testimony today. If you have any questions concerning my testimony, please feel free to contact me at victoria.veltri@ct.gov.

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